

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00 AID-05
FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 OMB-01 STR-07 /124 W
-----114545 061205Z /14

R 042338Z APR 78
FM USINT HAVANA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1553
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USDOC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 0867

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI EPAP ELAB CU
SUBJ: CUBANS ANNOUNCE MORE SUGAR-RELATED LABOR MOBILIZATIONS

REF: HAVANA 542

1. SECRETARIAT OF CUBAN LABOR UNION ORGANIZATION (CTC), APRIL 4,
IN HONOR OF BAY OF PIGS ANNIVERSARY AND FOLLOWING UP ON
FEBRUARY 28 CALL FOR ONE-HUNDRED DAYS OF DECISIVE SUGAR HARVEST
AND PLANTING EFFORT (REFTEL), ANNOUNCES THAT "THOUSANDS" OF
WORKERS FROM OUTSIDE SUGAR SECTOR WILL HAVE TO BE MOBILIZED
BEGINNING IN APRIL TO PERFORM VOLUNTARY LABOR IN SEEDING CANE
FIELDS FOR 1979 AND 1980 HARVESTS. CTC ALSO CALLS ON WORKERS
THAT REMAIN BEHIND IN THEIR CENTERS OF PRODUCTION OR SERVICES
TO PERFORM VOLUNTARY LABOR IN ORDER TO MAKE UP PRODUCTION LAGS
THAT MAY RESULT FROM AGRICULTURAL AND "OTHER" MOBILIZATIONS.

2. BEGIN COMMENT: NEED TO MOBILIZE WORKERS FROM NON-
SUGAR CANE SECTORS FOR SEEDING PRESUMABLY IS HEIGHTENED
BY RAIN-INDUCED REQUIREMENT TO EXACT CONTINUED MAXIMUM
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WORK FROM PERSONNEL NOW ENGAGED FULL-TIME OR ON MOBILIZED
BASIS IN SUGAR SECTOR. GRANMA, APRIL 3, ANNOUNCED THAT,
AS OF END OF MARCH, NOT ONE CUBAN PROVINCE HAD REACHED
PLANNED LEVEL OF SUGAR PRODUCTION. ACCORDING TO PUBLISHED
INFORMATION, CUBAN NATIONAL SUGAR PRODUCTION IS AT 78 PERCENT
OF THE "POTENTIAL NORM" - A MEASURE OF FULL PRODUCTION
UNDER IDEAL CONDITIONS ACCORDING TO FIDEL CASTRO, IN

HIS JANUARY PUERTO CARUPANO SPEECH, PRODUCTION WOULD HAVE TO REACH 90 PERCENT OR OVER OF "POTENTIAL NORM," PARTICULARLY IN THE SIX CRITICAL PROVINCES OF LAS TUNAS, VILLA CLARA, HOLGUIN, CAMAGUEY, CIEGO DE AVILA, AND GRANMA, IN ORDER TO ALLOW PRODUCTION TO INCREASE BY PLANNED FIGURES OF 500-700 THOUSAND TONS (TO TOTAL PRODUCTION OF 6.8 - 7 MILLION TONS.) CLEARLY, THERE HAVE BEEN PROBLEMS REACHING THIS GOAL SINCE ONLY PUBLISHED CUMULATIVE DATA WE HAVE SEEN RECENTLY ON SIX CRITICAL PROVINCES SHOW CIEGO DE AVILA IN APPARENTLY HONORIFIC POSITION AT 76 PERCENT OF "POTENTIAL NORM".

3. FAILURE TO MAKE UP PRODUCTION LAG IN MARCH IS PARTICULARLY SERIOUS SINCE SPRING RAINS WILL SOON BEGIN, SUCROSE CONTENT OF CANE WILL BEGIN TO DROP, AND SUGAR MILL MACHINERY WILL BEGIN TO BREAK DOWN AS RESULT OF CONSTANT USE SINCE EARLY DECEMBER.

4. IMPACT OF POST-FEBRUARY AND NEW LABOR MOBILIZATIONS MAY ACT AS SHORT-TERM DISINCENTIVE (UNTIL JUNE) FOR CUBANS TO ENGAGE IN MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN ETHIOPIA (EG., A MAJOR OFFENSIVE IN ERITREA) THAT MIGHT REQUIRE LARGE-SCALE REINFORCEMENTS FROM CUBA. AT THE SAME TIME, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT GEOGRAPHIC IMPACT OF SUGAR-RELATED LABOR MOBILIZATIONS HERE IN CUBA HAS BEEN UNEVEN. IN VISITS TO MINISTRIES AND OFFICES IN HAVANA, WE HAVE NOTED

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NO POSTED SIGNS OF SUGAR MOBILIZATIONS DURING LAST MONTH ONLY CALLS FOR SUNDAY VOLUNTARY LABOR IN POTATO HARVEST. LAST SUNDAY, APRIL 2, BEACH AT NEARBY SANTA MARIA DEL MAR WAS PACKED WITH ABLE-BODIED, YOUNG CUBANS - AT TIME WHEN MEDIA ARE STRESSING NEED TO KEEP UP SUNDAY-MONDAY LEVELS OF SUGAR PRODUCTION. THIS MAY INDICATE THAT IN HIGHLY POPULATED HAVANA AREA (20 PLUS PERCENT OF NATIONAL POPULATION), DESPITE NATIONAL SUGAR LAGS, AVAILABLE LABOR AND MILITARY MANPOWER POOL HAS NOT BEEN EXCESSIVELY SQUEEZED. (FYI HAVANA PROVINCE IS IN SECOND PLACE NATIONALLY WITH SUGAR PRODUCTION RUNNING AT 82 PERCENT OF POTENTIAL NORM. END FYI).

5. NONETHELESS WE READ CTC CALL FOR VOLUNTARY LABOR TO MAKE UP POTENTIAL PRODUCTION LAGS IN NON-SUGAR SECTORS AS EVIDENCE OF LEADERSHIP SENSITIVITY TO ECONOMIC IMPACT OF BOTH SUGAR AND ETHIOPIA-RELATED MILITARY MOBILIZATIONS. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OFFICIAL REMARKED TO CODEL DIGGS, APRIL 3, THAT ABSENCE OF TRUCK DRIVERS AND SIMILAR TECHNICIANS IN ANGOLA HAS HURT AGRICULTURAL EFFORTS. AND WE HAVE HEARD MULTIPLE REPORTS OF CONSTRUCTION DELAYS ON BOTH WESTERN AND SOCIALIST COUNTRY INDUSTRIAL

PROJECTS HERE.

6. IN VIEW OF FACT THAT CUBANS ARE ACUTELY SENSITIVE AFTER 1970 "TEN MILLION TON CAMPAIGN" TO DESTRUCTIVE IMPACT OF EXCESSIVE SUGAR-RELATED MOBILIZATIONS ON REST OF ECONOMY, WE SUSPECT THAT, HAVANA WILL SEEK TO MINIMIZE EXTRA-SUGAR SECTOR MOBILIZATIONS. THIS MAY BE DONE BY EXTENDING 1978 SUGAR HARVEST INTO JUNE, AND SHIFTING SOME SUGAR SECTOR LABOR RESOURCES INTO 1979 AND 1980 SEEDING ACTIVITY. DEPENDING ON ABSOLUTE CURRENT PRODUCTION FIGURES, THIS COULD REQUIRE NEGOTIATION WITH MAJOR NON-CAPITALIST CLIENTS (USSR AND EE) OF DELAY OF 1978 SUGAR DELIVERIES AND EVEN POSTPONEMENT TO 1979 OF SOME 1978 COMMITMENTS. GIVEN APPARENT EEC SUGAR SURPLUS, CONFIDENTIAL

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CUBANS MAY SEE THIS AS POTENTIALLY NEGOTIABLE STRATEGEM.
END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SUGAR, LABOR, PRODUCTION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978HAVANA00867
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780148-0911
Format: TEL
From: HAVANA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780496/aaaaddnq.tel
Line Count: 139
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c2b609b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 HAVANA 542
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3084920
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CUBANS ANNOUNCE MORE SUGAR-RELATED LABOR MOBILIZATIONS
TAGS: MILI, EPAP, ELAB, CU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c2b609b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014